

**SALEM COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
APRIL 4, 2007 MEETING MINUTES**

At 7:31 PM, Director Ware opened the meeting, announcing that Robin Weinstein would lead with a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Director Ware stated that adequate notice pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act had been given of this meeting and read the Open Public Meeting Act Statement.

On roll call, the following Freeholders were present: Deputy Director Bobbitt, Freeholders Timberman, Lindenmuth, Acton, Hogan and Director Ware. Freeholder Sullivan was absent due to illness.

Motion was made by Deputy Director Bobbitt to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the March 21, 2007 meeting and that the Minutes are received, approved and recorded in the Minute Book. Freeholder Timberman seconded his motion. The motion carried by a vote of 6/0.

Citation Honoring Joan Wojculewski upon Her Retirement was read and presented to Ms. Wojculewski by Director Ware.

Motion was made by Deputy Director Bobbitt that the Rules of the Board be temporarily waived for resolutions 4 & 11 on tonight's agenda. Freeholder Lindenmuth seconded his motion, which carried a vote of 6/0.

Introduction of the Salem County Budget
R. 2007-217

Director Ware presented the proposed budget via power point and speech:

[Picture of Freeholders] Good evening! Tonight the County's Finance Committee is formally submitting the 2007 budget to the entire Board of Chosen Freeholders for their consideration for adoption. I would like to thank each Freeholder for participating in the budget workshops and working with their departments. This budget represents months of hard work and determination to ensure that this is truly a budget that is responsible fiscally and socially. This year's budget represents the largest tax rate decrease in recent history (pause) amounting to five cents. **[Chart of Tax Rate over Time]** Additionally, this budget shows a very modest spending increase of 4.5%, which is the lowest in three years, and demonstrates that we are truly committed to restraining spending, improving services, and ensuring the viability of Salem County for generations to come.

Developing a County Budget is an interesting task because there are a number of factors to consider. I truly believe that the budget of any government entity, whether be Federal, State, County, or Municipality is a moral document because it reflects our beliefs on what government's role is in making lives better. **[Picture of People Helping People during Katrina]** The dramatic events that transpired over a year and half ago with the onslaught of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita demonstrated the need for a well functioning government with a solid infrastructure. In times of crisis, people look to government to help lift them out of uncontrollable circumstances. The reason is that government is not some abstract bureaucratic institution; rather, government is people helping people. An effective government has the ability to help us all achieve the full promise of America: "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

[Listing of 5-8 Government Services and their Offices] Everyday County Government is making a real difference in the lives of its residents. Whether it is providing transportation to a disabled resident to get medical treatment, or assisting a veteran to get the benefits he or she deserves, or working with families who just lost a loved one to find closure and settle an estate...Salem County Government is truly making a difference.

One of our more successful programs is the County RAMP Program which is administered through the Office for the Disabled. This program assists disabled residents with gaining safe and easy access to their home. A resident that has benefited from this program is Paul Marich of Quinton Township. Mr. Marich applied for this program last summer because his wife was ill and he was finding himself with mobility problems. Mr. Marich is now finding it easier to move freely in and out of his home. When we asked him how this program assisted him, this is what he said **[Slide of Marich Quote]:**

"I am really pleased with the new ramp because it has made it much easier for me to access my home and has enabled me to have more mobility to achieve my every day tasks. The Office for the Disabled has helped me in so many other ways then just the funding and construction of a new ramp. They bring caring and kindness with everything they do."

Mr. Marich's story is just one of many that show that this government is committed to social responsibility realizing that government can be a place where people come together to help other people.

Our approach to government does not deal with being a "big" or "small" government; rather, it has everything to do with being an effective government that best addresses the needs of people and is cost effective. We will continue to meet the needs of our residents by moving forward as One County. Salem County has achieved great success in the past, but we have challenges that face us as we plan ahead to ensure that we remain on the path of progress, prosperity, and promise. We will meet these challenges as one County working together across party, racial, gender, and municipal boundaries to ensure the continued success of Salem County for future generations.

[Surplus over Time] The number one problem cited by New Jersey residents are property taxes. I, along with the rest of the Freeholder Board, share the concern of stifling property taxes as it affects us all. This past year, the New Jersey Legislature took a major step in alleviating some of the pain of property taxes. However, we know that more must be done and should be done to change the way we fund government. County government consists of one third of your property tax bill and due to the funding formula there is little that we can do to provide real property tax relief to every resident. In order for County government to provide some form of relief to every resident it would mean reducing the County tax rate by over 20 cents, which amounts to over \$10 million dollars of government reductions. The only way to do this would be through massive lay offs and cutting many of the programs that our residents rely on, including the Salem Community College, the Office on Aging, the Office for the Disabled, and many others. This administration of the Board of Chosen Freeholders believes that this is not an option.

By using the County surplus, this budget provides a five-cent tax rate reduction that is coupled with last year's two cent reduction. The County surplus is created when projected revenues are

higher than anticipated and costs are lower than what was budgeted for. Our County surplus is an indication that Salem County is viable and productive. We are using a large portion of the County's record-level surplus to offset spending increases and fund the five-cent tax rate reduction.

[Property Tax Average Residential Assessment Chart] Let me be clear, that this tax reduction will not mean that individual tax payers will see a decrease in most municipalities. In three municipalities, we estimate that the County portion of property taxes will decrease. The way that the tax rate is applied to each municipality will result in an increase. That is the bad news, but the good news is this: If the County held the line on the tax rate, the average rate increase would be approximately \$315 per household county-wide. By lowering the tax rate an additional five cents, the average increase is approximately \$86. The Chart seen on the overhead shows the effect of holding the line on the tax rate as indicated in the blue compared to the new five cent reduction as seen in the purple. This budget provides property tax restraint by restricting spending and lowering the tax rate. We are doing our part to help with property taxes by presenting a budget grounded on fiscal restraint and balanced with social responsibility.

[Department Head Restructuring] We take our responsibility very seriously to keep increased costs to a minimum and to use the County's surplus to limit the growth of property taxes. This year the County government underwent a restructuring that scaled down the number of department heads from 28 to 12 and through attrition and consolidation we were able to save over \$100,000 in salaries and benefits. Additionally, we are working with our State and Federal representatives to bring more money to Salem County to fund projects so that the costs will not be squarely on the shoulders of the tax payers in this County.

[Budget Development Chart...before Freeholder Hearings, add Finance Committee Hearings with Departments] This budget that is being introduced this evening represents the lowest spending increase in two years. The overall spending increase in 2007 amounts to 4.5%. The previous drafts of the budget presented much larger spending increases; however, in our continued commitment of fiscal restraint I challenged each Freeholder to go back to their committees and get the spending increase down to 4.5%, which we have achieved through teamwork.

[Chart of Insurance, Health Care, Public Safety Costs] The spending increase that is represented in this budget is not a result of GROWING County government, but SUSTAINING and IMPROVING County government. Like your household budget, you know that costs for health care, fuel, and insurance is increasing and you have to make allowances for the increased costs, and County government is affected in the same manner. Additionally, we have the cost of living increases for our employees and the settlement of contracts which have also increased the fixed costs.

Our public safety officials are a terrific asset to the County of Salem as they truly are among the bravest and best. This year's budget presents a large increase in the public safety line item as we are working with the Sheriff's Department, Prosecutor's Office, and the Office of Emergency Management to improve public safety within the County. The largest increase is in the Sheriff's Office, including the jail, and the funding increase will go towards increased staffing, which the Sheriff believes is necessary to get the department in line with his vision for public safety.

In addition to increased funding of public safety, we are also funding improvements in the County Nursing Home to ensure that we get this home to the level of excellence that the residents need and deserve and the County tax payers expect. **[Picture of CHLP Health Law Project]** We are also funding a Community Health Law Project, which will provide legal and advocacy services, training, education, and related activities for persons with disabilities, with an emphasis on those most vulnerable and needy. The Community Health Law project assists individuals with mental health, developmental, physical, and visual disabilities; people living with HIV/AIDS and their families; and organizations that serve people with disabilities.

[Group Freeholder Pic] This administration of the Board of Chosen Freeholders is committed to moving County Government from a bureaucratic institution to a force for positive social change. We are also committed that this social change should not come at the expense of the tax payer. **[Chart of Tax Rate over Time]** Therefore, we are presenting a budget with the lowest spending increase in two years and the highest tax rate decrease in recent history bringing it close to 1999 levels. We will continue to combine our passion for good government with innovation, renovation, and preservation. There is more work to be done to ensure that progress continues so that the prosperity of the County becomes a promise to all of its residents now and in the future. Let us continue to work together as we strive to make Salem County the best that it can be. Thank you.

Freeholder Bobbitt motioned for the Introduction of the 2007 Budget, seconded by Freeholder Timberman. Roll Call Vote- Bobbitt-for, Timberman-for, Lindenmuth-for, Acton-abstain, Hogan-for, Ware-for. 5 for, none against, one abstention. Freeholder Acton abstained from voting as she is currently a member of the Women's Services Board, which receives funding from the County. She would like a determination if this is a conflict of interest.

PUBLIC HEARING

R. 2007-171

Resolution Authorizing the Establishment of a CAP Bank within the 2007 County Budget (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)

Freeholder Bobbitt motioned to Open the Public Hearing, seconded by Freeholder Timberman. On roll call, the motion carried a vote of 6/0.

Director Ware noted the public portion was open. No members of the public offered any comments. Freeholder Bobbitt motioned to close the Public Hearing. On roll call, the motion carried a vote of 6/0.

Freeholder Bobbitt motioned to Adopt Resolution No. 2007-171, with Freeholder Timberman seconding his motion. On roll call, the motion carried a vote of 6/0.

The following Proclamations were read by Clerk of the Board Gage:

Proclamation Recognizing National County Government Week

Proclamation Recognizing Community Transportation Services Day/Week

Proclamation Recognizing Child Abuse Prevention Month

CORRESPONDENCE

GENERAL

Eileen Swan, Executive Director, Department of Community Affairs, Office of Smart Growth – two pieces of correspondence:

- announcement of a public hearing on Salem County's report for the third round of the Cross-Acceptance process
- letter regarding the New Jersey State Preliminary Plan Map – Cross Acceptance
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Hunterdon County – resolution supporting Assembly Bill 1707 and Senate Bill 1522 which would provide for the establishment and support of County Offices for the Disabled in all 21 New Jersey Counties

Monmouth County – resolution supporting U.S. Senate bill No. 719 and House bill No. 1248 which would remove solid waste facilities from the Federal Surface Transportation Board jurisdiction

Morris County – resolution supporting legislation designed to protect children against the actions of sexual predators and pedophiles

Mary E. Scott, Secretary, Salem Community College Board of Trustees – notice of change in April's meeting date

Theresa Lappé, Pennsville Township Clerk – notice of termination of agreement regarding the specialized transportation for senior citizens

Petitions from various Salem County farmers regarding Cross-Acceptance

The Mrs. Mary Melita Family – letter against the PA5 which will take away very valuable acres

Monica Colsher, James Mona, Daniel Ragone and Dolores Manchello, residents of Carney's Point – letter supporting the Smart Growth Master Plan to locate growth along the NJ Turnpike and Route 295 corridor and against the PA5

Concerned Pennsville Residents – letter regarding M&M Hunting and Sporting Clays located in the wetland areas on the Mannington Meadows in Pennsville Township and the amount of lead seeping into the ground and water causing a hazardous condition

Diana Ford, Secretary, Safety Committee – December 19, 2006 Minutes

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

For the Month of January/February
Office of the Disabled
For the Month of March
Weights & Measures

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION MINUTES

Advisory Committee of Alcohol & Drug Abuse April 12th Minutes

4/19/07 4:03 PM

Providers Advisory Committee on Alcohol & Drug Abuse March 8th Minutes

Motion was made by Deputy Director Bobbitt to accept and file the correspondence, departmental reports, and the committee and commission reports. The motion was seconded by Freeholder Timberman. The motion carried by a vote of 6/0.

Motion was made by Deputy Director Bobbitt that all Bills and Claims, when properly signed and audited, be paid and charged to their respective accounts. The motion was seconded by Freeholder Lindenmuth. The motion carried a vote of 6/0.

Hearing no objections Director Ware requested that the resolutions be read in bulk.

R. 2007-218

ADMINISTRATIVE

EMERGENCY TEMPORARY RESOLUTION PRIOR TO ADOPTION OF BUDGET
COUNTY OF SALEM

R. 2007-219

ADMINISTRATIVE

RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION 2000-362 CONCERNING THE
TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE
COUNTY OF SALEM AND SALEM COUNTY L.L.C. FOR THE
GATEWAY REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Deputy Director Bobbitt moved for adoption of these two resolutions, with Freeholder Timberman seconding his motion. On roll call, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolutions carried a vote of 6/0.

R. 2007-220

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

RESOLUTION PROMOTING THE AWARENESS OF THE
SAFE HAVEN INFANT PROTECTION LAW

R. 2007-221

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE
FREEHOLDER DIRECTOR AND THE CLERK OF THE BOARD
TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION FOR THE
NEW JERSEY CANCER EDUCATION AND EARLY DETECTION SERVICES
FOR SALEM COUNTY

R. 2007-222

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING FREEHOLDER DIRECTOR AND
CLERK OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS FOR THE COUNTY OF SALEM
TO SIGN AND ACCEPT THE
2007 COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ACT GRANT APPLICATION

R. 2007-223

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE
2006 LOCAL HEALTH EVALUATION REPORT OF THE
CUMBERLAND/SALEM COUNTY DEPARTMENTS OF HEALTH

R. 2007-224

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE
SALEM COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS AND
MOUNTAIN WEST SECURITY SYSTEMS FOR THE
SALEM COUNTY NURSING HOME

Freeholder Hogan moved for adoption of these five resolutions, with Freeholder Acton seconding his motion. The motion for adoption of the foregoing resolutions carried a vote of 6/0.

R. 2007-225

PUBLIC SAFETY

RESOLUTION REJECTING ALL SUBMITTED BIDS FOR
PROVIDING AND INSTALLING THREE (3) CLEAN AGENT FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS
FOR THE COUNTY OF SALEM

R. 2007-226

PUBLIC SAFETY

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE
DIRECTOR OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
OF THE COUNTY OF SALEM TO ENTER INTO AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR
DISPATCHING SERVICES WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF PENNSVILLE

Freeholder Lindenmuth moved for adoption of these two resolutions, with Deputy Director Bobbitt seconding his motion. The motion for adoption of the foregoing resolutions carried a vote of 6/0.

R. 2007-227

PUBLIC WORKS

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE APPLICATION FOR MOTORIST SOLICITATION
PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION NO. 98-115
(American Cancer Society Relay for Life of Pittsgrove Township)

R. 2007-228

PUBLIC WORKS

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PURCHASE FOR EXPANSION OF
EXISTING ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE
SALEM COUNTY OFFICE OF ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Deputy Director Bobbitt moved for adoption of these two resolutions, with Freeholder Acton seconding his motion. The motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a vote of 6/0.

Under Unfinished Business, Freeholder Acton complimented the director on the budget presentation. Freeholder Lindenmuth thanked all of the Freeholders that took a tour of the correctional facility earlier this morning.

Under New Business, Director Ware commented that Freeholder Sullivan is getting better and that he was able to walk his granddaughter down the aisle last week.

Under the public portion of the meeting, Emerson Eisley commented on the progress of Avis Mill Lake committee. Mrs. Cuff and Mrs. Flowers commented on the drainage problems on her property caused by the development across the street from her in Alloway Twp. Freeholder Bobbitt addressed her concerns, however he also requested the Clerk to set up a meeting with the developer, the Mayor, and Mrs. Cuff.

Paul Schlimme stated that he is looking forward to the Freeholders continued support and the public meeting on April 17th. He stressed how important it is to support the plan.

R. 2007-229
ADMINISTRATIVE

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC
FROM A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
OF THE COUNTY OF SALEM

Deputy Director Bobbitt moved for adoption of this resolution, with Freeholder Timberman seconding his motion. On roll call, the motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution carried a vote of 6/0.

Closed session began at 8:25 PM. The meeting resumed at 8:45 PM with a motion to adjourn by Freeholder Bobbitt, seconded by Freeholder Timberman, carried 6/0.

Respectively submitted,

Earl R. Gage
Clerk of the Board